

CLAIMS:

1. A woodworking machine comprising:

a support structure;

5 a cutting tool supported by the support structure, where the cutting tool includes a cutting portion;

a motor adapted to drive the cutting tool;

a detection system to detect a dangerous condition between the cutting tool and a person; and

10 a reaction system adapted to disable the cutting portion of the cutting tool upon detection by the detection system of the dangerous condition.

2. The machine of claim 1, where the reaction system is adapted to cover the
15 cutting portion of the cutting tool upon detection by the detection system of the dangerous condition.

3. The machine of claim 2, where the reaction system is adapted to cover the
20 cutting portion of the cutting tool with a fabric material.

4. The machine of claim 2, where the reaction system is adapted to cover the cutting portion of the cutting tool with a metal material.

5. The machine of claim 1, wherein the cutting tool is circular with cutting edges disposed around a perimeter and the reaction system includes a strip of material adapted to wrap around the perimeter of the cutting tool.

6. The machine of claim 1, wherein the cutting tool includes teeth with gullets between the teeth, and where the reaction system is adapted to at least partially fill some gullets.

7. The machine of claim 1, where the reaction system is adapted to at least partially remove the cutting portion of the cutting tool upon detection by the detection system of the dangerous condition.

8. The machine of claim 1, where the reaction system is adapted to at least partially destroy the cutting portion of the cutting tool upon detection by the detection system of the dangerous condition.

9. A woodworking machine comprising:

an electrically conductive cutter;

a detection system adapted to detect contact between a person and the cutter,
where the detection system is adapted to capacitively impart an electric signal on the
5 cutter, and to detect the occurrence of a determined change in the electric signal on the
cutter; and

a reaction system associated with the detection system and the cutter, where the
reaction system covers the cutter upon detection of contact between the person and the
cutter by the detection system.

10. A woodworking machine comprising:

a support structure;

a cutting tool supported by the support structure;

15 a motor adapted to drive the cutting tool;

a detection system to detect a dangerous condition between the cutting tool and a
person; and

reaction means for disabling the cutting tool upon detection by the detection
system of the dangerous condition.